

PROCEEDINGS OF THE LAFAYETTE CITY-PARISH COUNCIL AND THE LAFAYETTE PUBLIC UTILITIES AUTHORITY OF THE CITY-PARISH OF LAFAYETTE, STATE OF LOUISIANA, TAKEN AT A SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF MAY 17, 2005.

ATTENDANCE

COUNCIL: Randy Menard – Chair (District 9), Rob Stevenson – Vice Chair (District 8), Bobby Badeaux (District 1), Dale Bourgeois (District 2), Christopher J. Williams, Ph.D. (District 3), Lenwood Broussard (District 5), Bruce Conque (District 6), Marc Mouton (District 7)

ABSENT: Louis C. Benjamin, Jr. (District 4)

COUNCIL STAFF: Norma Dugas (Clerk of the Council), Sally Angers (Administrative Assistant)

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF: L. J. Durel, Jr. (City-Parish President), Dee Stanley (CAO), Becky Lalumia (CFO), Gail Smith (Director of Administrative Services), Chief Randy Hundley (Police Department), Chief Robert Benoit (Fire Department), Eleanor Bouy (Director of Planning, Zoning and Codes), Terry Huval (Utilities Director), Tom Carroll (Public Works Director), Pat Ottinger (Legal Counsel), Tony Tramel (Director of Transportation), Melanie Lewis (Community Development Director), Keith Thibodeaux, (Director of Information Systems)

COMMENCEMENT

(TAPE 1)(SIDE A)(317) AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: Call to order.

Councilmember Randy Menard called the Special Joint Lafayette City-Parish Council/Lafayette Public Utilities Authority Meeting of May 17, 2005 to order.

A motion was offered by Stevenson, seconded by Conque, to appoint Councilmember Randy Menard as Chair for the Joint Meeting, and the vote was as follows:

Council Vote:

YEAS: Badeaux, Bourgeois, Williams, Broussard, Conque, Mouton, Stevenson, Menard

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Benjamin

ABSTAIN: None

Motion was unanimously approved.

LPUA Vote:

YEAS: Conque, Mouton, Stevenson

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Williams, Benjamin

RECUSED: None

Motion was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTIONS

(TAPE 1)(SIDE A)(341) AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: R-042-2005 A resolution of the Lafayette City-Parish Council and the Lafayette Public Utilities Authority commending the Volunteer Digital Divide Committee's report entitled "Bridging the Digital Divide: Crossing Over to a Technological Future Together," which encourages the provision of affordable, high-speed internet service for the benefit of all of the citizens in the City of Lafayette and calling upon the Lafayette Utilities System to promote its Fiber for the Future Project in order to support elements of this report.

Council Vote:

A motion to adopt by Bourgeois, seconded by Mouton, and the vote was as follows:

YEAS: Bourgeois, Williams, Conque, Mouton, Stevenson, Menard

NAYS: Badeaux, Broussard

ABSENT: Benjamin

ABSTAIN: None

Motion was approved.

LPUA Vote:

A motion to adopt by Conque, seconded by Stevenson, and the vote was as follows:

YEAS: Williams, Conque, Mouton, Stevenson

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Benjamin

RECUSED: None

Motion was unanimously approved.

Before the vote on the resolution, a report on "Bridging the Digital Divide: Crossing Over to a Technological Future Together" was given by Terry Huval, Utilities Director and the following members of the Digital Divide Committee: Chairman Walter Guillory, Glenn Lambert, Kevin Domingue, John St. Julien and Jennifer Hamilton.

Huval stated that the presentation will be a committee report. He said that during the feasibility study conducted last year, there were questions concerning the digital divide and he was asked to prepare a more formal plan to address the divide. An appeal was made for community volunteers to help with this effort and the respondents that agreed to serve on the committee were: Walter Guillory, John St. Julien, Layne St. Julien, Kevin Domingue, Jennifer Hamilton, Marcel Lalonde, Glenn Lambert, Ed Bowie, Doug Menefee, Joy Miguez, Abigail Ransonet, Taylor Rock, Melanie Lewis, Joe Bourg and Steve Creeden. He stated that an estimated 500 volunteer hours were spent on this effort. Huval then called on the committee Chairman Walter Guillory to give the report.

Guillory presented an overview of the report and stated that the committee studied the following: "Structural Barriers", "Motivational and Historical Barriers", "Barriers to Full Participation" and "Assessing Successes and Shortfalls".

Glenn Lambert gave the presentation on the "Structural Barriers". He stated that the committee recommends: 1) Internet service must be made available to all segments of the community with initial fiber build-out needs to include areas that are traditionally under-served; 2) Prices for broadband must be affordable; 3) Design LUS Communications System to include enhanced features that are easy to use; 4) Make donated or low-cost computers available to those who qualify; and 5) Develop funding resources to support such initiatives.

Kevin Domingue gave the presentation on "Motivational Barriers". He stated that the committee recommends: 1) Help under-served citizens become more aware of the benefits of broadband access; 2) Develop a strong, community oriented Internet Service Provider (ISP); and 3) Develop community training facilities.

John St. Julien gave the presentation on "Barriers to Full Participation". He stated that the committee recommends: 1) Incorporate technological advances that enhance and equalize bandwidth between in-city subscribers to encourage local commercial growth and sustain our local cultural uniqueness; 2) Donated or low cost computers with an easy-to-use interface already installed, making the computer friendlier to wary new participants; 3) Make computer education free and easily accessible to all residents using both one-on-one and group training; 4) Provide web-based programs; 5) Develop easy-to-use templates for resumes; 6) Include programs for different interests; 7) Develop a series of templates to help micro-businesses to develop; and 8) Provide CD-based free software for off-line use and to bridge users to commercial software.

Jennifer Hamilton gave the presentation on "Assessing Successes and Shortfalls". She stated that the committee recommends: 1) Develop and periodically run citizen survey; 2) Assemble "Assess and Advise" panels; 3) Gather public available objective data on a timely basis; and 4) Perform periodic community assessments.

(TAPE 1)(SIDE B)(80) Upon questioning by Badeaux, Huval stated that the committee did not look at the cost of the digital divide, they just looked at the process of how this could be done.

Badeaux stated that the Council needs more specific information on the cost for implementation of the digital divide in order to answer questions from the voters before the election on July 16th.

Conque requested a more definitive report on who is considered the underserved, what are the geographic areas, what are the boundaries in terms of economics, ethnics, age, all the parameters involved and what will it cost to provide this service.

Upon questioning by Williams, Huval explained that "fiber to the home" means fiber to the front of the house, back of the house or adjacent to the house. He said that the goal of LUS is to be able to provide services at a cost that everyone can take advantage of.

(TAPE 1)(SIDE B)(410) Persons signing up to speak:

- Erin Fitzgerald stated that she is in favor of the ideas and principles that were presented in the digital divide presentation.
- Douglas Menefee spoke in favor of the digital divide.
- Layne St. Julien stated that the Digital Divide Committee's mandate was to come up with a vision for what Lafayette would look like if there were no digital divide, not to look at cost, who would be served or census tracts.

President Durel thanked the Digital Divide Committee for their work. He stated that he feels that only about 1% of communities in the United States are talking about "Digital Divide" and if the voters don't approve the proposition on July 16th, the digital divide discussion is over. He would encourage everyone to keep that in mind because there is no digital divide issue without fiber.

Upon questioning by Williams, Huval stated that the resolution commends the Digital Divide Committee for their work in coming up with a report and encouraging LUS to take the report and look for ways to implement the recommendations for "Digital Divide".

ADJOURN

(TAPE 2)(SIDE A)(19) There being no further business to come before the Special Joint meeting of the Lafayette City-Parish Council/Lafayette Public Utilities Authority, Chair Menard declared the meeting adjourned.

/s/ Norma A. Dugas

NORMA A. DUGAS, CLERK
LAFAYETTE CITY-PARISH COUNCIL